

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS FRANKFURT 006002

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [PINR](#) [TBIO](#) [GM](#)

SUBJECT: Baden-Wuerttemberg Cabinet Shuffle Raises Eyebrows

Reftel: 04 Frankfurt 5551

Sensitive but unclassified: not for internet distribution.

1. (U) SUMMARY: Baden-Wuerttemberg (B-W) Minister President Erwin Teufel (Christian Democrat/CDU) has restructured the state cabinet following the retirement of Interior Minister Thomas Schaeuble (CDU) and State Minister of Economics Walter Doering's (FDP) resignation amid scandal. Teufel took a chance on a major restructuring in order to bring more women and younger politicians into the cabinet. Lucrative public-sector jobs for retiring ministers and Teufel's unwillingness to declare his own future intentions have sparked criticism within the party. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) On July 8, Teufel announced the new CDU cabinet members. Heribert Rech, currently Schaeuble's State Secretary (2001-present), will become Interior Minister.

SIPDIS

Current State Secretary Stefan Mappus will become minister for environment and transportation, replacing incumbent Ulrich Mueller. Federal Parliament (Bundestag) delegate/CDU national executive board member Tanja Goenner will become minister for social affairs (replacing Friedhelm Repnick). Teufel also appointed three new state secretaries (all CDU): Friedlinde Gurr-Hirsch (Ministry of Agriculture), Dieter Hillebrand (Ministry of Environment and Transportation), and Wolfgang Reinhardt (Finance Ministry). NOTE: Following Economics Minister Doering's resignation in June, the FDP nominated state caucus chief Ernst Pfister as new economics minister (reftel).

3. (U) Prior to the cabinet restructuring, Teufel had agreed to make Schaeuble CEO of the Rothaus Brewery (a highly profitable state-owned enterprise in the Black Forest region near Schaeuble's hometown). Teufel offered Repnick the CEO position at the B-W state lottery (Lotto-Totto GmbH). Repnick, who initially resisted leaving government, agreed to accept Teufel's generous job offer. The golden parachutes sparked protests from party circles including the B-W Young Conservatives (Junge Union) and the Association of Taxpayers. CDU contacts privately expressed concern that these moves will expose the party to charges of cronyism.

4. (U) With the appointment of Goenner and Mappus as ministers, Teufel increased the representation of women and rejuvenated his cabinet, since Goenner (34 years) and Mappus (38 years) are considerably younger than the average cabinet minister. The reshuffle has fueled the smoldering successorship debate, as the B-W conservative women's association and the CDU labor wing called on Teufel, who turns 65 in September, to announce his retirement plans. Christian Baeumer (head of the CDU labor wing and close ally of CDU caucus chief/heir apparent Guenther Oettinger) demanded that Teufel put his cards on the table by October.

5. (SBU) COMMENT: Political observers in the region see the cabinet reshuffle as a sign that Teufel wants to continue beyond the 2006 state elections -- but if Teufel intended to gain some political buffer as a result of this reshuffle, he did not achieve his goal. In fact, the nominations have created a mini-political inferno in the state. The decision to award lucrative jobs in state-owned enterprises to departing officials caused an outcry at a time of high unemployment and constant cutbacks of social benefits. Some CDU activists predict a backlash at election time. Media and some party insiders are beginning to question whether Teufel is starting to lose his political instincts, suggesting thirteen years in power may have created a sense of omnipotence and a loss of grounding in reality. END COMMENT.

BODDE